

Help & Customer Service

[All Help Topics](#)

Legal & Compliance

Legal Notices

Alexa Communication Usage Guidelines

Auto Popcorn Replenishment FAQs

Alexa Reminders SMS Terms and Conditions

Amazon Echo Look FAQs

Echo Frames and Carrera Smart Glasses Battery Life and Testing Information

Source Code Notice for Echo and Alexa Devices

Alexa Terms of Use


Alexa, Echo Devices, and Your Privacy


Alexa and Alexa Device FAQs


Welcome to Amazon Sidewalk


About Amazon Smart Thermostat ECOLOGO Silver Certification


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[Alexa & Alexa Device Terms](#) ▸ [Legal & Compliance](#) ▸

Alexa, Echo Devices, and Your Privacy

Amazon knows that you care how information about you is used, and we appreciate your trust that we will do so carefully and sensibly. Here are answers to common privacy questions about Alexa and Echo devices.

1. Is Alexa recording all my conversations?

No. By default, Alexa-enabled devices are designed to detect only your chosen wake word (e.g., Alexa, Amazon, Computer, Echo, or Ziggy). The device detects the wake word by identifying acoustic patterns that match the wake word. No audio is stored or sent to the cloud unless the device detects the wake word (or Alexa is activated by pressing a button). On certain devices, you can enable features that allow you to interact with Alexa without the wake word. For instance, Follow Up Mode allows you to make follow-up requests to Alexa without having to repeat the wake word and, on compatible devices, interrupt Alexa to make requests. When you join Alexa+, Follow Up Mode will be turned on for your compatible Echo devices and the Alexa app. See the FAQ “How does Follow up Mode work?” for more information.

You can also configure supported Echo devices to detect specific sounds, such as the sound of smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, and glass breaking. See the FAQs “How does Alexa Emergency Assist work?” and “How do Routines with sound detection work?” for more information.

2. What happens when I speak to Alexa?

When you speak to Alexa, a recording of what you ask Alexa is sent to Amazon's cloud, where we process your request and other information to respond to you. For example, when you ask, “Alexa, play top hits on Amazon Music,” we use the recording of your request and information from Amazon Music to play top hits.

3. How do I know when Echo devices are sending audio to the cloud?

When Echo devices detect the wake word or when the Action button available on some Echo devices is pressed to activate Alexa, a visual indicator appears on the device to indicate that the device is recording your request to stream to the cloud. For instance, a light ring on the Echo device will turn blue or a blue bar will appear on Echo Show devices. When you use the wake word, the audio stream includes a fraction of a second of audio before the wake word, and closes once your request has been processed. In addition, Follow Up Mode allows you to make follow-up requests to Alexa without having to repeat the wake word and, on compatible devices, interrupt Alexa to make requests. When Follow Up Mode is on, a visual indicator will show you when you can speak to Alexa without having to repeat the wake word and when your device is recording audio to send to the cloud.

You can also configure Echo devices to play a short audible tone any time audio is sent to the cloud within Settings in the Alexa app. Certain Echo devices, like Echo Input, have the short audible tone turned on by default.

4. Can I turn off the microphones on Echo devices?

Yes. Echo devices are equipped with a microphones off button. When the button is pressed, the power to the microphones is disconnected and a dedicated red light is illuminated. When

the microphones are turned off, your device cannot record and stream audio to the cloud, even when you say your chosen wake word.

5. Can I review and delete my Alexa voice recordings?

Yes. You can review Alexa voice recordings associated with your Amazon account and delete the voice recordings – one by one, by date range, by Alexa-enabled device, by attributed voice ID, or all at once – by visiting **More > Alexa Privacy** in the Alexa app and Echo Show devices or <https://www.amazon.com/alexaprivacysettings>. From either page, you can also choose to have your Alexa voice recordings older than 3 or 18 months deleted automatically, or you can choose not to save any voice recordings. If you choose not to save any Alexa voice recordings, we will automatically delete your voice recordings after we process your requests and automatically delete all of the voice recordings currently in your Voice History as well. And you can delete all those voice recordings associated with your account at once for each of your Alexa-enabled devices and apps by visiting [Manage Your Content and Devices](#). Deleting voice recordings may degrade your Alexa experience. If you choose not to save any voice recordings, voice ID may not work. Similarly, if you delete the voice recordings Alexa used to create your voice ID (by, for example, choosing to have your Alexa voice recordings older than 3 or 18 months deleted automatically), voice ID may not work.

If you have changed your default marketplace while using an Alexa-enabled product, you will need to delete all Alexa voice recordings associated with your account separately for each marketplace. To learn how to transfer your Amazon account to another marketplace, go [here](#).

6. What happens when I delete my Alexa voice recordings?

When you delete Alexa voice recordings associated with your account from Voice History, we will delete the voice recordings that you selected and the text transcripts of those recordings from Amazon's cloud. If you choose not to have any Alexa voice recordings saved, the text transcripts of your requests will be retained for 30 days, after which they will be automatically deleted. We retain those text transcripts to allow you to review the requests you make to Alexa in your Voice History, and to improve your Alexa experience and our services. You can delete the text transcripts at any time by going to **More > Alexa Privacy** in the Alexa app and Echo Show devices or <https://www.amazon.com/alexaprivacysettings>.

After we delete your voice recordings, we may still retain certain records of your Alexa interactions, including records of actions Alexa took in response to your requests. This allows us, for instance, to continue to provide your reminders, timers, and alarms, process your orders, personalize your experience, remember your preferences and the things you've shared with Alexa (like notes in Remember This), show your shopping lists, tasks, and messages sent through Alexa Communication, and troubleshoot Alexa based on your feedback. If your request was processed by an Alexa skill, deleting your voice recordings does not delete any information retained by the developer of that skill (skill developers do not receive voice recordings). For more information on Alexa skills, refer to the FAQ "How do Alexa skills work?" For more information on notes, refer to the FAQ "What is Remember This?" For more information on removing messages sent through Alexa Communication, refer to the FAQ "How do I remove Alexa messages from my conversation list?" For more information on deleting the voice recordings you used to teach Alexa your voice when you created a voice ID, refer to the FAQ "How does voice ID work?"

7. How does deletion work?

You can delete certain data associated with your account. For instance, you can delete your voice recordings and associated text transcripts, as well as information Alexa receives from third-party smart home devices, using settings available in the Alexa app or at [Manage Your Content and Devices](#). When you request deletion, we begin the process of securely deleting your data from Amazon's cloud storage systems.

Our deletion processes are designed to be comprehensive and can take some time to complete. While we are processing your deletion request, the data for which you requested deletion may still be used to personalize your experience, including by informing Alexa's responses, and we may still provide that data to you in response to a data access request. We make every effort to ensure our deletion processes run smoothly; however, the specific timing of deletion may vary based on the type of information requested for deletion and the technical operation of our internal systems. Alexa does not support voice requests to delete data in all circumstances, and Alexa may not always interpret or execute requests to delete information made by voice correctly. We design our systems to continue securely processing your requests until deletion is completed. You can always review the voice recordings and text transcripts associated with your account at any time by going to **More > Alexa Privacy** in the Alexa app and Echo Show devices or <https://www.amazon.com/alexaprivacysettings>. Data that is collected by third parties, like skill developers, and data stored outside of Amazon's cloud, like data stored on your Echo or mobile devices, may not be deleted. Your deletion

requests may not delete copies of data that have been de-identified and are no longer linked to you or your account. If we have used your data to improve our services, we may continue to retain and use the systems trained on your data after your data has been deleted from our data stores.

For more information on how deletion works in various contexts, see the FAQs “What happens when I delete my Alexa voice recordings?”, “How can I delete the information Alexa receives from my third-party smart home devices?”, and “Can I review and delete my Alexa Emergency Assist audio recordings?”

8. How do my voice recordings, text transcripts, and other interactions with Alexa improve our services?

Alexa is designed to get smarter and more personalized every day. For example, we use your Alexa interactions to help improve Alexa’s ability to understand and respond to natural language requests and to train Amazon’s machine learning models. Training our models with real world interactions from a diverse range of customers is necessary for Alexa to respond properly to variations in our customers’ speech patterns, dialects, accents, and vocabulary, the acoustic environments where customers use Alexa, and the many ways in which customers engage with Alexa. This training relies in part on supervised machine learning, an industry-standard practice where humans review an extremely small sample of your Alexa interactions to help Alexa understand how to interpret your requests correctly and provide appropriate responses. For example, a human reviewing a customer’s voice request for the weather in Austin may identify that Alexa misinterpreted it as a request for the weather in Boston. And a human reviewing Alexa’s response to a request about a current event may determine whether Alexa’s response was accurate, appropriate, and properly personalized. Our supervised learning process includes multiple safeguards to protect customer privacy. For example, you can review and delete your voice recordings, and you can manage the use of your voice recordings to improve our services and develop new features, by visiting **More > Alexa Privacy** in the Alexa app and Echo Show devices or <https://www.amazon.com/alexaprivacysettings>.

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Yes

No

[Back to top](#)

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- Amazon Newsletter
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- Investor Relations
- Amazon Devices
- Amazon Science

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- Recalls and Product Safety Alerts
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